

STACKABLE GARMENT HANGER

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED PATENT APPLICATIONS

[0001] This patent application claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 60/438,961, filed January 9, 2003.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0002] This invention pertains to garment or clothes hangers, and more particularly relates to hangers that can be stacked on other hangers.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0003] With conventional clothes hangers, there exists the problem that hangers cannot easily be stacked vertically to reduce space for storing clothes and to allows more garments to be carried by a person at a time. To combat this and other problems, some plastic hangers have been developed with small hooks near the base of the neck to hook onto other hangers.

[0004] While these devices fulfill their respective, particular objectives and requirements, the devices are not without their drawbacks. For example, a slight bump of many such hangers causes the hangers to come apart, defeating the purpose of such hangers. Additionally, the hooks often get tangled up with shirt collars. Accordingly, the present invention discloses a new garment hanger that allows hangers to remain together until removed by a user and that is simple and easy to use.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0005] The invention provides a hanger with a hook member having a loop in the neck section. The loop portion is at a 90 degree to the hook surface and the loop can be a circular shape, a triangular shape, a rectangular shape, etc. The hanger generally comprises a frame and a hook member. The frame includes two arms projecting outwardly to define opposing outer ends of the frame. The hook member extends upwardly from the frame. The loop section is between the hook portion of the hook member and the frame.

[0006] According to more detailed aspects of the invention, the frame is preferably made of wood or plastic, while the hook member is preferably made of wire or plastic. The triangular section is sized such that a hook portion of another hanger is easily placed in the triangular section while not taking up too much horizontal space.

[0007] In another embodiment of the invention, the hook member has a circular shaped neck section. The circular shaped neck section allows a multitude of hangers to be placed in the "circle."

[0008] These and other advantages of the invention, as well as additional inventive features, will be apparent from the description of the invention provided herein.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0009] FIGS. 1a, 1b, and 1c depict front, top, and cross-sectional views of the hanger assembly constructed in accordance with the teachings of the present invention;

[0010] FIGS. 2a, 2b and 2c depict front, top and cross-sectional views of an alternate embodiment of the hanger assembly constructed in accordance with the teachings of the present invention;

[0011] FIG. 3 depicts the hanger assembly of Fig. 1 in a stack;

[0012] FIGs. 4a-4h depict cross-sectional views of alternate embodiments of the hanger assembly in accordance with the teachings of the present invention;

[0013] FIG. 5 illustrates another embodiment of the hanger assembly that has an open circular shape in accordance with the teachings of the present invention;

[0014] FIG. 6 illustrates a side view of the hanger assembly of FIG. 5;

[0015] FIG. 7 illustrates the hanger assembly of FIG. 5 in a stack;

[0016] FIG. 8a illustrates a further embodiment of the hanger assembly that has an open loop; and

[0017] FIG. 8b illustrates a side view of the hanger assembly of FIG. 8a in a stack.

[0018] While the invention will be described in connection with certain preferred embodiments, there is no intent to limit it to those embodiments. On the contrary, the intent is to cover all alternatives, modifications and equivalents as included within the spirit and scope of the invention as defined by the appended claims.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0019] The invention provides a garment hanger that allows hangers to remain together until removed by a user that is simple and easy to use. The garment hangers can be stacked together without getting tangled up with garments hung on the hangers.

[0020] Turning now to the drawings, like reference numerals refer to like elements. FIG. 1 illustrates a hanger assembly 20 constructed according to the teachings of the present invention. The frame 30 generally includes two arms 31, 32 projecting outwardly from the center of the frame to define opposing outer ends 33, 34 of the frame. A hook member 36 is attached to the center of the frame 30 for attaching the hanger to a rod or other support. The frame 30 is preferably constructed of wood, although it will be appreciated that any material such as metal or plastic can be used. The arms 31, 32 have been illustrated as extending downwardly and outwardly in a generally straight configuration, although it will be recognized that the arms may be of any size, configuration or cross-sectional shape as is known in the art.

[0021] The hook member 36 includes a hook section 38, a loop section 40, and a mount section 42. The loop surface is generally approximately perpendicular to the hook section 38. In the embodiment shown, the loop section 40 is triangular shaped. The hook section 38 is for attaching the hanger to a rod or other support, including a triangular shaped section of another hanger as illustrated in FIG. 3. While FIG. 3 shows a hanger 24 with a triangular shaped section hooked in a triangular section of hanger 22, it will be recognized that any type of hanger can be put within the triangular shaped section 40 of hanger 22. The mount section 42 is attached to the hanger via conventional means. The loop section 40 can be formed in different sizes and shapes. The loop section is typically formed into a closed shape, although it may have a slight opening to allow hangers to slide through the opening. As used herein, the term "substantially closed" refers to both "closed" loop shapes and loop

shapes that have a slight opening. The size in one embodiment is dependent on the thickness of the hanger frame. For example, the triangular shaped section 40 of the hanger of FIG. 3 is sized such that the distance of the outermost section 44 of section 40 from the mount section 42 is longer than the width of the frame 30.

[0022] While FIGS. 1a-1c illustrate a triangular shaped loop section, it is recognized that other shapes may be used such as circular, rectangular, trapezoidal, etc. For example, FIGs. 2a-2c illustrate a hanger 26 having a circular shaped section 50. The size of the circular shaped section 50 can vary from a small circle that a single hanger fits within the circle or a larger circle where a plurality of hangers can fit within the circle. FIGs. 4a-4h illustrate other shapes of the loop section. FIG. 4a shows an alternative triangular shaped section 60₁. FIG. 4b shows a shark-fin shaped section 60₂. FIG. 4c shows a rectangular shaped section 60₃. FIG. 4d shows a square shaped section 60₄. FIG. 4e shows a trapezoid shaped section 60₅. FIG. 4f shows a parallelogram shaped section 60₆. FIG. 4g shows an octagon shaped section 60₇. FIG. 4h shows a right triangular shaped section 60₈. Other shapes include polygons, quadrilaterals, rhombus, pentagon, hexagon, heptagon, nonagon, decagons, and the like.

[0023] As previously stated, the loop section may have an opening to allow hangers to slide into the loop. This is illustrated in FIGs. 5 to 8b. FIGs. 5 and 6 show a hanger 70 with a circular loop section 72 that has an opening 74. FIG. 7 illustrates hangers 70 being stacked. FIG. 8a and 8b illustrate hanger 80 having a loop section 82 within opening 84. The hanger 80 is stackable in two ways. The first way is such that the hangers 80 stack apart from each other as shown by hangers 80₁ and 80₂ (see FIG. 8b). The second way is shown in dashed lines where the hangers stack on top of each other as shown by the dashed outline of hanger 80₃ beneath hanger 80₁.

[0024] Accordingly, it can be seen that the hook member with the loop shaped section (e.g., triangular shape and circular shaped, etc.) allows hangers to be stacked. The shapes allow one or more hangers to be placed within the shape without catching clothes when the hangers are removed from the shaped sections. Alternatively, hangers can be placed on top of the shape, which also allows one or more hangers to be held.

[0025] In these respects, the garment hanger with the shaped section in the hook member substantially departs from the conventional concepts and designs of the prior art,

and therefore provides an apparatus primarily developed for the purpose of permitting hangers to be stacked on top of each other based on a user's available space.

[0026] The use of the terms “a” and “an” and “the” and similar referents in the context of describing the invention (especially in the context of the following claims) are to be construed to cover both the singular and the plural, unless otherwise indicated herein or clearly contradicted by context. The terms “comprising,” “having,” “including,” and “containing” are to be construed as open-ended terms (i.e., meaning “including, but not limited to,”) unless otherwise noted. Recitation of ranges of values herein are merely intended to serve as a shorthand method of referring individually to each separate value falling within the range, unless otherwise indicated herein, and each separate value is incorporated into the specification as if it were individually recited herein. All methods described herein can be performed in any suitable order unless otherwise indicated herein or otherwise clearly contradicted by context. The use of any and all examples, or exemplary language (e.g., “such as”) provided herein, is intended merely to better illuminate the invention and does not pose a limitation on the scope of the invention unless otherwise claimed. No language in the specification should be construed as indicating any non-claimed element as essential to the practice of the invention.

[0027] Preferred embodiments of this invention are described herein, including the best mode known to the inventors for carrying out the invention. Variations of those preferred embodiments may become apparent to those of ordinary skill in the art upon reading the foregoing description. The inventors expect skilled artisans to employ such variations as appropriate, and the inventors intend for the invention to be practiced otherwise than as specifically described herein. Accordingly, this invention includes all modifications and equivalents of the subject matter recited in the claims appended hereto as permitted by applicable law. Moreover, any combination of the above-described elements in all possible variations thereof is encompassed by the invention unless otherwise indicated herein or otherwise clearly contradicted by context.